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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 07/07/09

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ARTICLES:

- (1) Drive to unseat Aso with prime minister paralyzed in LDP

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) is now being faced with ultimate choices --whether to unseat Taro Aso as prime minister or to dissolve the House of Representatives in desperation. With the loss of the Shizuoka gubernatorial election, many in the LDP are convinced that the party cannot contest the next Lower House election under Aso's leadership, but that replacing the prime minister for the third time in a row would not be tolerated. The LDP has been unable to find a successor to Aso. As it stands, the party is now caught in a dilemma.

LDP Election Strategy Council Deputy Chairman Yoshihide Suga told reporters yesterday: "This election was not a vote of confidence on the Aso administration. A gubernatorial election does not affect a national election."

However, junior lawmakers, whose political bases are weak, have objected. Lower House member Koichiro Shimizu said: "Some say that a local election has nothing to do with a national election. That's not true. It is a problem that we think that we cannot fight in the election under Mr. Aso's leadership." A former LDP secretary general expressed his outlook that moves to find ways to oust Aso as prime minister will move into full swing.

Former Secretary General Hidenao Nakagawa has already said: "(Aso) can make an honorable decision," suggesting that Aso resign. In the New Komeito, the LDP's junior coalition partner, one member said: "I

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think we will lose the general election even if the prime minister is replaced. But replacing Aso is better than keeping him in office." Attention has begun shifting to who will succeed Aso. However, it is difficult to predict whether Aso will be removed from office if the ruling camp fails to secure a majority of the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly seats.

In a LDP executive meeting yesterday evening, General Affairs Committee Chairman Takashi Sasagawa criticized the drive to unseat Aso as prime minister, saying: "We formed the Aso cabinet with the consensus of all members last September. Before that, we were criticized by the public for the two previous cabinets lasting only one year. The public cannot understand the idea of moving up the LDP presidential race."

Shinzo Abe and Yasuo Fukuda, LDP members, both stepped down from their posts as prime minister out of the blue. Some LDP leaders are concerned that if Aso is replaced, the LDP will unavoidably be subjected to severe criticism from the public.

In a spot nationwide public opinion poll conducted by the Asahi Shimbun, 65 percent of respondents said that they "cannot understand the move to remove Aso from office" and 67 percent of LDP supporters said that they "cannot understand." Asked about the LDP's image after the party asked Miyazaki Gov. Hideo Higashikokubaru to run in the snap election on the LDP ticket, only 10 percent said that the image was improved, while 44 percent answered that the image became worse. These figures indicate that the public is watching the LDP's "useless resistance" coldly.

(2) Poll on Aso cabinet, political parties

YOMIURI (Page 11) (Abridged)
July 4, 2009

Questions & Answers
(Figures shown in percentage)

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

Yes 19.7

No 66.4

Other answers (O/A) 2.1

No answer (N/A) 11.8

Q: (Only for those who answered "yes" to the foregoing question)
Pick only one from among the following reasons for your approval of
the Aso cabinet.

Something can be expected of its policy measures 16.4
The prime minister has leadership ability 5.3
There's something stable about the prime minister 8.5
His cabinet's lineup is good 7.6
Because it's a coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New
Komeito 45.8
O/A 3.9
N/A 12.6

Q: (Only for those who answered "no" to the foregoing question) Pick
only one from among the following reasons for your disapproval of
the Aso cabinet.

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Nothing can be expected of its policy measures 29.1
The prime minister lacks leadership ability 34.8
There's nothing stable about the prime minister 20.2
His cabinet's lineup is not good 2.7
Because it's a coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New
Komeito 10.2
O/A 0.3
N/A 2.7

Q: Which political party do you support now? Pick only one.

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 25.5
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 28.6
New Komeito (NK) 3.7
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 1.7
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1.1
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0.2
Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) ---
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) ---
Other political parties 0.0
None 35.6
N/A 3.5

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Hatoyama, who
do you think is more appropriate to be prime minister?

Prime Minister Aso 23.9
DPJ President Hatoyama 40.6
N/A 35.5

Q: Do you think the DPJ will be able to take the reins of government
in the next election for the House of Representatives?

Yes 47.1
No 39.0
N/A 13.9

Q: Prime Minister Aso has appointed Yoshimasa Hayashi to the post of
State Minister for Economic and Fiscal policy, which Finance
Minister Yosano had held concurrently, and he has also appointed
Motoo Hayashi to the post of National Public Safety Commission
chairman, which Internal Affairs and Communications Minister Sato
had held concurrently. Do you appreciate these cabinet ministerial
appointments this time?

Yes 15.7
No 56.4
N/A 27.9

Q: Prime Minister Aso has forgone his plan to change the LDP's
executive lineup along with the cabinet ministerial appointments
this time. Do you think Prime Minister Aso displayed his leadership
in the series of personnel appointments?

Yes 8.9

No 83.2
N/A 7.9

Q: DPJ President Hatoyama's fund management body submitted political fund reports that contained false information about individual political donations. DPJ President Hatoyama explained that it was

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done at his secretary's discretion. Do you think he has fulfilled his accountability?

Yes 10.3
No 79.7
N/A 10.0

Q: Do you think DPJ President Hatoyama should resign from his party post to take responsibility for this problem?

Yes 29.5
No 56.7
N/A 13.9

Q: If an election were to be held now for the House of Representatives, which political party would you like to vote for in your proportional representation bloc?

LDP 25.4
DPJ 35.2
NK 3.8
JCP 3.1
SDP 1.2
PNP 0.3
RC ---
NPN ---
Other political parties 0.1
Undecided 25.2
N/A 5.7

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted July 2-3 across the nation on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis. Households with one or more eligible voters totaled 1,732. Valid answers were obtained from 1,021 persons (58.9 PERCENT).

(Note) In some cases, the total percentage does not add up to 100 PERCENT due to rounding.

(3) Poll on Aso cabinet, political parties

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Abridged)
July 6, 2009

Questions & Answers
(Figures shown in percentage. Parentheses denote the results of the last survey conducted June 13-14.)

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

Yes 23.4 (17.5)
No 60.9 (70.5)
Don't know (D/K) + no answer (N/A) 15.7 (11.9)

Q: (Only for those who answered "yes" to the previous question)
What's the primary reason for your approval of the Aso cabinet? Pick only one from among those listed below.

The prime minister is trustworthy 13.6 (20.4)
Because it's a coalition cabinet of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New Komeito 10.9 (9.5)
The prime minister has leadership ability 1.4 (3.6)
Something can be expected of its economic policies 10.6 (11.3)

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Something can be expected of its foreign policies 7.1 (6.4)
Something can be expected of its political reforms 5.7 (0.4)

Something can be expected of its tax reforms 0.7 (0.5)
Something can be expected of its administrative reforms 5.3 (0.9)
There's no other appropriate person (for prime minister) 42.7
(44.3)
Other answers (O/A) 0.6 (0.6)
D/K+N/A 1.4 (2.1)

Q: (Only for those who answered "no" to the first question) What's the primary reason for your disapproval of the Aso cabinet? Pick only one from among those listed below.

The prime minister is untrustworthy 17.2 (13.9)
Because it's a coalition cabinet of the Liberal Democratic Party and the New Komeito 8.1 (7.8)
The prime minister lacks leadership ability 25.9 (23.0)
Nothing can be expected of its economic policies 19.7 (18.8)
Nothing can be expected of its foreign policies 1.2 (0.7)
Nothing can be expected of its political reforms 11.6 (10.8)
Nothing can be expected of its tax reforms 4.7 (5.6)
Nothing can be expected of its administrative reforms 5.9 (5.9)
Don't like the prime minister's personal character 4.7 (12.0)
O/A --- (0.4)
D/K+N/A 1.0 (1.1)

Q: Prime Minister Aso has appointed former Defense Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi to the post of state minister for economic and fiscal policy and LDP Deputy Secretary General Motoo Hayashi to the post of National Public Safety Commission chairman. Do you appreciate these appointments?

Yes 8.9
No 38.7
Can't say which 47.2
D/K+N/A 5.2

Q: Prime Minister Aso did not replace the LDP's executive lineup, including the secretary general, due to opposition from within the LDP. Instead, he only appointed a few cabinet ministers. What do you think about this?

He should have shuffled the LDP's executive lineup 19.6
He had no alternative to making only those personnel changes 25.1
He should not have made any personnel changes in his cabinet 43.3
D/K+N/A 12.0

Q: DPJ President Yukio Hatoyama admitted that his fund management body's political fund reports contained false information about individual donations. He explained that his own personal funds were used for the reported donations. Is this account convincing?

Yes 12.4
No 78.3
D/K+N/A 9.3

Q: Would you like the present LDP-led coalition government to continue, would you like it to be replaced with a DPJ-led coalition government, or would you otherwise like a new framework of political parties to form a coalition government?

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LDP-led coalition government 19.6 (14.9)
DPJ-led coalition government 26.6 (35.9)
LDP-DPJ grand coalition 13.9 (14.7)
New framework under political realignment 32.6 (28.0)
D/K+N/A 7.3 (6.5)

Q: Which political party are you going to vote for in the next House of Representatives election in your proportional representation bloc?

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 26.3 (18.7)
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 34.3 (47.8)
New Komeito (NK) 5.9 (2.7)
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 4.5 (3.2)

Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1.2 (1.8)
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0.7 (1.6)
Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) --- (---)
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) 0.4 (0.2)
Other political parties, groups --- (0.2)
D/K+N/A 26.7 (23.8)

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Hatoyama, which one do you think is more appropriate for prime minister?

Taro Aso 28.3 (21.5)
Yukio Hatoyama 42.0 (50.4)
D/K+N/A 29.7 (28.1)

Q: Which political party do you support?

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 27.2 (19.8)
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 26.5 (38.5)
New Komeito (NK) 4.1 (2.1)
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 4.5 (2.0)
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1.0 (1.8)
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0.3 (0.5)
Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) --- (0.1)
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) 0.1 (0.1)
Other political parties, groups 0.1 (0.3)
None 32.5 (33.4)
D/K+N/A 3.7 (1.4)

Polling methodology: This survey was conducted across the nation on July 3-4 by Kyodo News Service on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis. Among randomly generated telephone numbers, those actually for household use with one or more eligible voters totaled 1,462. Answers were obtained from 1,022 persons.

(4) Chief Cabinet Secretary Kawamura welcomes U.S.-Russia nuclear reduction agreement

SANKEI (Online) (Full)
12:07, July 7, 2009

In the U.S.-Russia summit meeting (held on July 6), the two leaders agreed on the framework of an agreement replacing the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty I (START I). Touching on this fact, Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura stated at a press conference this morning: "We highly evaluate this as definite progress in the treaty talks. The government of Japan welcomes it."

Kawamura also said, "We expect the conclusion of a meaningful treaty

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that will contribute to progress on global nuclear disarmament and to success in the 2010 Review Conference of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT)." He expressed his hopes for the conclusion of the negotiation before the treaty's expiration in December.

(5) USTR issues statement on regulatory reform, expresses "concerns on Japan's beef import restrictions and Kanpo insurance"

NIKKEI (Online) (Full)
13:30, July 7, 2009

Yusuke Yoneyama, Washington

U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk issued a statement on July 6 to coincide with the publication of a report on the Japan-U.S. "Regulatory Reform Initiative." He said that he "continues to have serious concerns about restrictions on U.S. beef imports and the competition conditions with regard to Kanpo (Japan Post Insurance Company)," and that he "looks to the Japanese government to address these concerns quickly," indicating his hopes for the early removal of the restrictions on beef imports.

Due to the BSE problem, the Japanese government limits the import of U.S. beef to meat obtained from cattle "aged 20 months or younger." However, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) has

recognized the safety of U.S. beef, and Japanese beef is also recognized as having a similar safety level as U.S. beef, leading the U.S. side to feel strongly that the import restrictions are inappropriate.

(6) Interview with Michael Green, former presidential assistant:
Diversified tools necessary for decision-making

NIKKEI (Page 5) (Full)

-- With the world marching toward multi-polarization, which way should the United States go?

"The United States' physical strength may be on the decline, but American values have kept winning. Such values as democracy, the rule of law, and human rights are supported in Latin America, Asia, and Eastern Europe, and as a result, the United States' hegemony appears to be expanding."

"Like China and Iran, countries with power surpassing that of the United States have risen in their respective regions. But there are rival countries near such regional powers to strike a balance. In Asia, Japan and South Korea are such countries, and Egypt and Saudi Arabia in the Middle East. The United States should team up with those countries."

Countries not powerless

-- The influences of non-state organizations, such as armed insurgents and nongovernmental organizations (NGO), are growing.

"According to Council on Foreign Relations President Richard Haass and Newsweek International Editor Fareed Zakaria, the world will become non-polar and states no longer will hold power. I think states will remain as main players in international relations. Alliances must be strengthened in order to maintain the power

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balance between states."

-- Do you think the modalities of the international decision-making mechanism will significantly change as well?

"Some people say that the United Nations must be strengthened, while some others say that high priority should be put on the coalition of the willing of democracies. I would like to say, 'Mobilize them all.' It is important to have a toolbox containing many tools."

-- The Iranian government has suspended the development of natural gas with a French firm and concluded a contract with a Chinese corporation instead.

"China may have won a contract, but the country has become isolated because of it. During the era of President Chirac, France tried to counter the United States by teaming up with Germany and China. The situation today is quite different. France has consulted with the United States about addressing the question of China."

China does not desire a zero-sum game

-- China is the world's largest holder of U.S. Treasury bonds. The United States seems to have some reserve toward China.

"In the bipolar world during the Cold War, the zero-sum game in which one participant's gains result only from another's equivalent losses reigned supreme. China today does not desire a zero-sum game with the United States. A decline in the prices of U.S. Treasury bonds from their sales will cause trouble for China. I don't think the Chinese leadership has that much political power."

"But China's military buildup worries me. The reason is because the country has significantly increased its capabilities in such fields as satellites, cyberspace, and submarines. The aim is to demonstrate China's presence in the South China Sea, the Taiwan Strait, and the East China Sea. The United States should sell F-22 fighter jets to Japan and F-16s to Taiwan to maintain the power balance. It would be

better for Japan, the United States, Australia, and India to conduct maritime exercises. There is a need to give the impression that the more China pursues its unclear military buildup, the tighter the solidarity among its neighboring countries will become."

-- What is your view of North Korea's nuclear development?

"What the United States fears is that the Kim Jong Il regime will collapse and North Korean nuclear weapons will fall in the hands of al-Qaeda and other international terrorist groups. The nuclear deterrent seems to work with the Kim regime which wants to maintain the current system but not with al-Qaeda which does not hesitate to resort to suicide bombings. In such a case, chances are that nuclear weapons will be used on New York, Washington, or Jerusalem rather than on Tokyo or Seoul. That is why the United States places an emphasis on nuclear nonproliferation."

(7) "Seiron" column: Do not let Murata's good intentions go to waste

SANKEI (Page 7) (Full)
July 7, 2009

Hisahiko Okazaki, former ambassador to Thailand

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Disappointing follow-up response

When I read former Vice Foreign Minister Ryohei Murata's remarks on the nuclear issue in the newspaper, I was excited and hopeful that there would be new developments on this issue.

Although I have not contacted Mr. Murata, it is obvious that he sacrificed his own interest in making those remarks. Civil servants are obliged to maintain the secrecy of information they obtain in the course of performing their duties, and this rule applies even after retirement. Penalties of up to one year imprisonment can be imposed for violating this rule. It is evident that he chose to take the risk and tell the truth.

While such self-sacrifice is perhaps needed to change the government's rigid position over the years, I am disappointed that nothing has happened after the remarks were made.

Certainly the government is taking a "safe" position to make sure that nobody gets hurt. If the secret agreement (on the U.S. forces bringing nuclear weapons into Japan) does not really exist, there is no secret to keep, so no one has the obligation to keep the secret. Everything will be vanished into oblivion once again. However, such oblivion is only on the part of Japan. This does not hold water at all in the international community because the whole affair is like an ostrich hiding its head in the bush to flee from a hunter.

When I met the late Dr Edwin Reischauer (former U.S. ambassador to Japan), he was not indignant about "Foreign Minister Ohira's explicit promise" but was exasperated by the absurdity of the situation. Furthermore, the meeting (between Reischauer and Ohira in April 1963) has been confirmed by U.S. diplomatic documents subsequently. What I am worried about is that if Japan continues to carry on like this, it will be unable to engage in strategic dialogue with the United States to reinforce the bilateral alliance.

Statement does not breach the confidentiality obligation

In another article I wrote previously for this column, I mentioned that the Japan-U.S. strategic dialogue proposed by Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage came to nothing while the U.S.-China strategic dialogue conducted under his successor Robert Zoellick was very successful. The U.S. side showed great enthusiasm for both dialogues, so it is not to blame for the failure of the Japan-U.S. talks.

Many people say that China is now more important for the U.S., so Japan will be abandoned. Such worries are completely unnecessary

under the present situation as far as the U.S. side is concerned. Kurt Campbell has said that: "The best way to deal with China is to strengthen U.S. partnership with Japan as much as possible. That is the only option. Without such a foundation, nothing can be accomplished in Asia."

Here, what I am worried about is that Japan, due to its incompetence in strategic dialogue, may not be in a position to respond to the United States' good intentions.

In light of North Korea's nuclear armament, there have been noisy discussions about the effectiveness of the U.S. nuclear umbrella, or

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the so-called extended deterrence, for Japan. A discussion on nuclear strategy is inevitable between allies when they discuss military strategy. As a matter of fact, NATO's Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) regularly discusses nuclear strategy.

Needless to say, it is also desirable to have a similar venue for consultation and planning between Japan and the U.S. But how can common strategy be discussed when Japan continues to deny even something it once promised?

Whether Mr. Murata's remarks constitute a violation of his confidentiality obligation may be a trivial matter to him, but I think this is not a violation. If this case is brought to court, the substance of the secret - whether it is indeed a matter that needs to be kept confidential - will be examined. Blowing the whistle on anomalies in the bureaucracy does not violate the confidentiality obligation. In this case, the secret agreement has already been disclosed in U.S. diplomatic documents, so unless there are very special or overriding reasons, it does not need to be kept confidential.

Policies that will not tie hands in the future

What I had hoped after the Murata remarks was that the government would stop its temporizing statements soon and revert to intellectual integrity.

With the subsequent advancement in military technology, the impact of this issue on reality has diminished. The issue here is intellectual integrity that forms the foundation of the relationship of trust and strategic dialogue between allies. If Japan engages in honest strategic dialogue now, the conclusion may well be that unless there is a major change in the situation, port calls by U.S. ships carrying nuclear weapons will be unnecessary.

I look forward to a change in the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) government's position in the future.

In the case of a Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) administration, I pray that it will break away from the inertia of the LDP era, acknowledge the existence of the international commitment between Ohira and Reischauer, and show its intellectual integrity in creating a new venue for Japan-U.S. strategic consultations.

Soon after the inauguration of the new administration, the mass media will probably try to reconfirm the government positions upheld until now, including the interpretation of the three non-nuclear principles. I hope the DPJ will only say that it will not be bound by the prejudices of the LDP era and will make a comprehensive review as the need arises and not commit itself prematurely. Unless it is able to do so, having a system of two major political parties will be meaningless; and if it succeeds, the DPJ's victory will have historical significance.

Having been liberated from past positions, I hope that people of intellectual integrity, regardless of whether they are rightist or leftist in ideology, will no longer say things like "Japan has the right to collective self-defense but is unable to exercise it."

(8) Redefining Japan's policy stance (part 1): Aim to achieve wise government

NIKKEI (Page 1) (Excerpts)
July 7, 2009

By Naoaki Okabe, editor in chief at the head office

The Japanese economy has climbed out of its worst phase, but there is no light to be seen at the end of the tunnel. The global economic crisis has dealt a most serious blow to an export-oriented Japan. Furthermore, second-rate politics is working as a drag on economic recovery. Populism is making the government's policy stance inconsistent. A breakthrough can be found in efforts to recall Japan's policy stance and reconstruct it.

Consistent policies urged

The fatal error the Aso administration has committed is that it has deleted the words "structural reforms" from its policy menu. Fiscal spending and structural reforms do not contradict each other. In order to emerge from the ongoing recession, it is important to implement policies that are the combination of fiscal spending and structural reforms. Demand creation-type innovation can be achieved by three elements -- fiscal spending, structural reforms and entrepreneurship, according to Tokyo University Professor Hiroshi Yoshikawa.

The Aso administration has aimed at shrugging off the Koizumi reform drive. The negative legacy of the Koizumi reform drive is not that his reforms were excessive but that both regulatory reform and decentralization were insufficient, with too much importance attached to postal privatization. The Koizumi administration did not embark on an effort to hike the sales tax. It left reform of social security unattended. Japan lagged behind in major completion after the Cold War. Behind the so-called lost era are those blunders.

The Aso administration was greatly buffeted by populism, unable to contain moves to go against political trends for reform to the time when postal privatization was carried out. This is the reason that Aso as the prime minister of a mature state has lost the confidence of Japan and other countries.

An exit strategy and a growth strategy, which will set the future course of Japan, will be called into question in the upcoming general election. Japan will go into a rapidly aging society with the worst accumulated public debt among industrialized countries. It is impossible for it to flee from this grim reality. Voters should opt not for inconsistent policies, even if they sound pleasant to the ear, but for policies with vision, even if they are bitter tasting.

In order to achieve a wise government, social security systems, such as public pension schemes, should be drastically reformed in preparation for the upcoming rapid aging of the society. It would be easier to obtain public understanding, if the sales tax is hiked for the purpose of financing social security expenses. It is the responsibility of politics to build a secure society in a bipartisan way.

It is also necessary to tackle tax code reform as well as social security reform. What is necessary is to lower the corporate tax, the highest in the world, to revitalize the Japanese economy.

Population and human resources hold the key

Population and human resources hold the key to a growth strategy. What is needed is a comprehensive strategy to tackle the declining birthrate, by putting up a birthrate goal, and build a society in which people can rear children with peace of mind. Japan should also aim to open the country to human resources. Boosting investment in education is indispensable in nurturing entrepreneurship.

A low carbon society revolution for the prevention of global warming is the 21st version of the Industrial Revolution. Technical innovation, such as the developments of new energies and electric vehicles, is burgeoning here and there. Higher barriers are advantageous to Japan, as it has accumulated environmental technologies.

It is also important to adopt bring in the energy of East Asia, which is strong even at a time of a crisis. Now is the time to present a roadmap for integrating East Asian economies.

Once the major recession is over, the political pendulum, which has gone far in one direction, is bound to swing back. When it returns to the previous position, what will be sought is neither a small government nor a big government but a wise government. It is unavoidable for the government to intervene, when the market makes mistakes. However, if the government bails out management failures, the logic of capitalism will collapse. Market mechanisms will continue to be the core of capitalism. Wise regulations that move the market are needed.

The cascade of economic and political crises has caused the loss of confidence in Japan. As Japanese prime ministers change so often, they are not referred to by name at G8s or G20s. It is now time for voters to revamp politics so as to rebuild Japan's policy stance, looking 20 years or 30 years ahead.

(9) Profile of New IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano

ASAHI (Page 2) (Full)
July 3, 2009

Toru Kaneko, Vienna Bureau

Yuki Amano, 62, after being elected director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) expressed his determination to the press corps: "Japan is considered a model country in terms of the peaceful use of nuclear energy and promotion of nuclear nonproliferation. I would like to tell that to the world." Nine months have passed since he first ran in the election held late last September to choose the new IAEA head. He has finally landed the post in his second attempt.

He is the first Japanese to head the IAEA, an international organization of 2,300 experts that seeks to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Amano entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) in 1972. He has served in the nuclear energy and nonproliferation area for about 15 years. As a representative of the industrialized countries, he worked on completely shutting down the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. His coordination ability is highly valued. He will aim at saying what he has to say.

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When he was young, he was fond of astronomical observation. Dreaming to win a Nobel Prize, he entered the department of science at the University of Tokyo, but he only lasted one year there. He then reentered the same university (graduating from the law faculty.) This part of career is well-known in the ministry.

He recalls the words, "Please don't let the tragedy of atomic bombings be repeated," which atomic-bomb victims said every time he had visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki for the memorial service for the dead. He will now have to deal with the Iranian and North Korean nuclear issues.

(10) Simulation of DPJ administration's foreign and security policies after three months in power

SHUKAN POST (Pages 34-35) (Excerpts)
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Foreign and security policy: Greatest vulnerability of coalition government of strange bedfellows; Cabinet disintegrates due to

disagreement after North Korea fires Taepodong missile

The U.S. electronic reconnaissance aircraft Cobra Ball detected the launching of a ballistic missile from North Korea. Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama was notified immediately at the Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei). He was about to order the Aegis ships in the Sea of Japan to intercept the missile.

"Mr Prime Minister! It is unacceptable to wage war!!" cried Mizuho Fukushima, state minister for the declining birth rate, rushing into the prime minister's office at the Kantei. As Fukushima and Hatoyama were engaged in fierce debate, the Taepodong missile flew over Akita Prefecture. Fortunately, Japan did not suffer any damage. However, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) declared its withdrawal from the coalition government that very day, and the Hatoyama administration was now forced to steer the government as a minority ruling party.

The most obvious "structural problem" of a coalition government led by the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) is said to be in the areas of foreign and security policy affairs.

Professor Satoshi Morimoto of the Institute of Global Studies, Takushoku University, made the following comment: "While the assumption is to form a coalition government with the SDP, the DPJ has within its folds conservatives like Vice President Seiji Maehara. In other words, it is an alliance of strange bedfellows. For this reason, the DPJ is still not actively revealing its foreign policy even now, when a change of government is fast approaching."

Its vague stance is also reflected in the criticisms voiced in the party after former President Ichiro Ozawa made his statement that "the Seventh Fleet will be sufficient for U.S. presence in the Far East."

Security policy is regarded as the DPJ coalition government's greatest vulnerability. That is the reason why Prime Minister Taro Aso suddenly brought up the question of the Seventh Fleet toward the end of the second round of party leaders' debate, when time was running out.

Morimoto observes that: "The Seventh Fleet operates in the entire West Pacific; it is not in the vicinity of Japan all the time. This

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is a unit that is only effective with collaboration with U.S. Forces Japan (USFJ). If the USFJ withdraws from Japan, leaving only the Seventh Fleet behind, will Japan reinforce the Self-Defense Forces? It is irresponsible to evade this issue, and there is no doubt that the DPJ's thinking is putting the country at risk."

For sure, passages such as "establishing an independent foreign policy" and "a genuinely equal alliance with the United States" can be found in the DPJ's policy index, but concrete policies are absent.

However, from its record in the Diet, the party has opposed both the extension of the special antiterrorism measures law and the anti-piracy law. A senior DPJ official claims that, "Once we assume power, we will withdraw from the Indian Ocean and from waters off Somalia."

However, one needs to take a hard look at this policy.

Morimoto explains that: "The Indian Ocean mission is part of the operations in Afghanistan, which is a top priority to U.S. President Barack Obama. (The DPJ) has not provided a vision of how it intends to rebuild the Japan-U.S. alliance after the withdrawal. Furthermore, the advanced countries are engaged in joint support operations in the Indian Ocean. Japan's unilateral withdrawal will have an impact on aspects other than the Japan-U.S. relationship. This will undermine national interest."

Around 2,000 Japanese tankers pass through the Indian Ocean each year. If a detour becomes necessary because of the absence of escorting by the Maritime Self-Defense Force, this will jack up fuel costs. It has been pointed out that in such a case, oil prices will

rise, and this will affect the people's livelihood. Yet, the DPJ has not come up with a solution.

In the first place, some even say that this withdrawal policy is just an "expedient" to co-opt the SDP. It will be too pathetic if after taking over power, the cabinet "disintegrates in midair due to internal disagreement" once a problem arises.

A "hit-or-miss gamble" is simply unacceptable when it comes to the question of how to protect the people's life.

ZUMWALT